

Inquiry-based learning is a dynamic process that capitalizes on students' natural curiosity about the world they live in. Their questions and wonderings are at the centre of the learning experience as they engage in activities that help them investigate, solve problems and draw conclusions about a particular inquiry.

When we use differentiated instruction to meet the needs, interests and learning styles of our students it is important to have a variety of teaching strategies. Inquiry-based learning is one approach that can provide a context for differentiated instruction.

<b>Elements of Differentiation</b>	<b>How Inquiry Supports these Elements</b>
Readiness	Inquiry allows us to provide open-ended experiences and investigations that enable students to enter at their own readiness levels. "The basic skills of literacy, reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing, and presenting, are enhanced through inquiry learning." (Kunhithau) Teachers guide the learning and provide support as needed.
Interest	Inquiry-based learning is centred around students' interests and questions. Engagement is high and students are motivated to explore, problem-solve, and use critical thinking as they work through the inquiry process
Respectful Tasks	With inquiry all students are engaged in interesting, authentic learning experiences where they can build on prior knowledge and understandings.
Assessment for Learning	Teachers have many opportunities to gather evidence of student understandings, knowledge and needs when students are working on an inquiry. Through observation and conversation teachers ask open-ended questions to clarify and extend thinking.

#### **Resources**

Galileo Educational Network. What is inquiry?

<http://Capacity Building Series #24: Government of Ontario>

Kuhlthau, Carol Collier. Guided Inquiry: Learning in the 21st Century.

Dr. Jeffrey Wilhelm: Teaching with Inquiry and Understanding